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FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP
SUITE 500
3000 K STREET NW
WASHINGTON DC 20007

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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Patent No. 7,450,956 :
Nami Isomae : DECISION DISMISSING
Application No. 10/069,957 : REQUEST FOR
Issue Date: November 11, 2008 : RECONSIDERATION OF
Filed: March 7, 2002 : PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT
Attorney Docket No. : UNDER 37 CFR 1.705
016778-0446 :

This is in response to the REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT UNDER 37 CFR §1.705, filed December 31, 2008. Patentee requests that the determination of patent term adjustment be corrected from one thousand thirty-eight (1038) days to one thousand six hundred thirty-nine (1639) days.

The request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment is DISMISSED with respect to making any change in the patent term adjustment determination under 35 U.S.C. § 154(b) of 1038 days.

BACKGROUND

On June 24, 2008, the Office mailed a notice that the initial determination of patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) to date was 1061 days. On November 11, 2008, the application matured into U.S. Patent No. 7,450,956, with a revised patent term adjustment of 1038 days. The Office determined that the 1168 days of Office delay pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b) overlaps with the 1238 days of Office delay

pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1) accorded prior to the filing of the request for continued examination. As such, the Office allowed only entry of the adjustment of 1238 days. No additional days of patent term adjustment were entered at issuance under the three-year pendency provision. Given the applicant delay of 200 days, the patent issued with a revised patent term adjustment of 1038 (1238 - 200) days.

On December 31, 2008, patentee timely submitted this request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment (with required fee), asserting that the correct number of days of Patent Term Adjustment is 1639 days under the court's interpretation of the overlap provision as set forth in Wyeth v. Dudas, 580 F. Supp. 2d 138, 88 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1538 (D.D.C. 2008). Patentee asserts that pursuant to Wyeth, a PTO delay under §154(b)(1)(A) overlaps with a delay under §154(b)(1)(B) only if the delays "occur on the same day." Patentee maintains that the total non-overlapping PTO delay under §154(b)(1)(A) & (B) is 1839 (1238 + 1169 - 568 overlap) days as these periods do not occur on the same day. Further, given the applicant delay of 200 days, patentee asserts entitlement to 1639 (1839 - 200) days of patent term adjustment.

OPINION

At the outset, the Office notes that patentee's assertion that the period of delay, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.702(b), for the Office taking in excess of three years to issue the patent, is 1169 days is incorrect. A review of the record indicates that the date the national stage commenced is March 8, 2002. As stated in 37 CFR 1.703(b), the period of adjustment under § 1.702(b) is the number of days in the period beginning on the day after the date that is three years after the date on which the application was filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) or the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) in an international application and ending on the date a patent was issued. While the date of completion of all 35 U.S.C. 371 requirements, March 7, 2002, is the date used in calculation of the examination delay under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1), the date the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b), March 8, 2002, is used to determine the Three Year Delay under 37 CFR 1.703(b).

Patentee's interpretation of the period of overlap has been considered, but found inconsistent with the Office's interpretation of the overlap provision, 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) limits the adjustment of patent term, as follows:

to the extent that the periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in paragraph (1) overlap, the period of any adjustment granted under this subsection shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

As explained in *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004), the Office interprets 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) as permitting either patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv), or patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), but not as permitting patent term adjustment under both 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv) and 154(b)(1)(B). Accordingly, the Office implements the overlap provision as follows:

If an application is entitled to an adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the period of delay under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay overlap under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). Thus, any days of delay for Office issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the filing date of the application, which overlap with the days of patent term adjustment accorded prior to the issuance of the patent will not result in any additional patent term adjustment. See 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), and 37 CFR § 1.703(f). See *Changes to Implement Patent Term Adjustment Under Twenty Year Term; Final Rule*, 65 Fed. Reg. 56366 (Sept. 18, 2000). See also *Revision of Patent Term Extension and Patent Term Adjustment Provisions; Final Rule*, 69 Fed. Reg. 21704 (April 22, 2004), 1282 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 100 (May 18, 2004). See also *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark*

Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004).

Further, as stated in the *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, the Office has consistently taken the position that if an application is entitled to an adjustment under the three-year pendency provision of 35 U.S.C.

154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending before the Office (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application (or, in an international application, the date that the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f)), is the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A).

This interpretation is consistent with the statute. Taken together the statute and rule provide that to the extent that periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1) and in corresponding §1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

In this instance, the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) is the period during which the application was pending before the Office beginning on the date the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b), March 8, 2002, and ending on the date of filing of a request for continued examination (RCE), May 19, 2008 (not including any other periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)). The relevant period ends with the filing of the RCE as the three-year time frame specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) does not include the period subsequent to the filing of the RCE. 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i).

Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1), 1238 days of patent term adjustment were accorded during the pendency of the application for Office delay prior to the filing of the request for continued examination. There were no Office delays subsequent to the filing of the request for continued examination. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b), 1168 days of patent term adjustment accrued for Office

issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the commencement of the national stage under 35 U.S.C. 371(b).

All of the 1168 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(b) overlap with the 1238 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1). Entry of both the 1168 days and the 1238 days is neither permitted nor warranted. 1238 days is the actual number of days issuance of the patent was delayed.

Accordingly, at issuance, the Office properly entered 0 additional days of patent term adjustment for the Office taking in excess of three years to issue the patent.

CONCLUSION

In view thereof, no adjustment to the patent term will be made.

The Office acknowledges submission of the \$200.00 fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.18(e). No additional fees are required.

Telephone inquiries specific to this matter should be directed to Senior Petitions Attorney Douglas I. Wood, at (571) 272-3231.

Christina Tartera Donnell

Christina Tartera Donnell
Senior Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions